



(BOOK 9)

The Blunders of our Governments

Authors: Anthony King & Ivor Crewe

This book is the latest offering from King and Crewe, two erudite political analysts who have produced a book that gives well researched insight into some of the most serious cock-ups by governments in recent times. Of course, because politicians are human beings it is unreasonable to expect that those in power will never make mistakes. The point made very clearly by this book is how costly it is to the British taxpayer when Westminster and Whitehall get things wrong on a grand scale which so often happens.

The chapter that I found so depressing and worrying was the one dealing with lack of accountability. I have long held the view that politicians and their civil servants are rewarded for failure rather than being punished. King and Crewe make this point and emphasis that it removes the Incentive to succeed. The failure of so many government sponsored IT projects takes up a lot of space in the book and many readers will not be surprised to learn that the disastrous project to regionalise fire controls gets its fair share of coverage. However, even the huge waste of money associated with FiReControl project is but a drop in the ocean compared to the eye-watering sums lost on the attempt to produce an IT system spanning the UK for the NHS. Under the banner of 'Connecting for Health' this project lost an estimated £20 billion without producing anything of value.

Confidence in those we elect is at a low ebb but I must warn readers that anyone in this frame of mind will not have their confidence restored by reading this excellent book.

JOHN CRAIG

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